

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12, 26-35, and 37 are currently pending. Claims 13-25 and 36 have been canceled without prejudice; and Claims 4, 5, 8, 11, 12, 26, 28-30, and 33 have been amended by the present amendment. The changes to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner requested that an Information Disclosure Statement be filed regarding Japanese Patent Application No. 11-152063; the Examiner indicated that Applicant has not filed a certified copy of the priority document; the Abstract was objected to as not being presented as a single paragraph on a separate sheet; the Title of the Invention was objected to as not being descriptive of the claimed invention; the specification was objected to regarding informalities in paragraphs [0187] and [0229]; Claims 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter; Claims 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite; Claims 26-28 were objected to regarding a minor informality; Claims 4-12, 18-24, 29-35, and 37 were objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c) as being improper multiple-dependent claims; Claims 1-3 were allowed; and Claims 26-28 were indicated as allowable if the objections to those claims were overcome.

In response to the objection to the Abstract, Applicant respectfully submits that an Abstract consisting of a single paragraph between 50-150 words on a separate sheet was submitted by Applicants on page 2 of the Preliminary Amendment filed July 30, 2001. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully traverses the objection to the Abstract.

Applicant respectfully submits that the objection to the specification is rendered moot by the present amendment to the specification. Paragraphs [0187] and [0229] have been

amended as suggested in the Office Action. Accordingly, the objection to the specification is believed to have been overcome.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of Claims 15-17 under 35 U.S.C. §§101 and 112 are rendered moot by the present cancellation of Claims 15-17.

Applicants respectfully submit that the objection to the Title is rendered moot by the present amendment to the Title. The Title has been amended to be shorter and to be more descriptive of the claimed invention.

In response to the objection to Claims 26-28, Claim 26 has been amended as suggested in the Office Action. Accordingly, the objections to Claims 26 and 28 are believed to have been overcome.

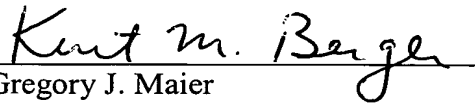
Regarding the objections to Claims 4-12, 18-24, 29-35, and 37 under 35 U.S.C. §1.75(c), Applicant respectfully submits that those rejections are rendered moot by the present amendment or cancellation of those claims. In particular, Applicant notes that Claims 18-24 have been canceled without prejudice. Further, Claims 4-12, 29-35, and 37 have been amended to address the issue of improper multiple dependencies. Accordingly, the objections to the claims are believed to have been overcome.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1 and 26 (and all associated dependent claims) are in condition for formal allowance.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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